

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS
NORTHERN DIVISION**

JOSEPH MEARS

PLAINTIFF

v.

Case No. 3:20-cv-00149-JTK

**ANDREW SAUL, *Commissioner*,
Social Security Administration**

DEFENDANT

**ORDER GRANTING IN PART DEFENDANT’S MOTION FOR
EXTENSION OF TIME TO FILE ANSWER**

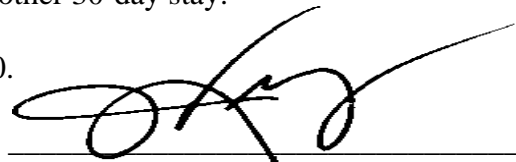
Before the Court is Defendant’s First Motion for Extension of Time to File Answer. *Doc.*

7. Defendant seeks a 60-day extension to file an answer and the certified administrative record.

See id. Plaintiff’s counsel does not oppose this motion.

In his motion, Defendant states that the Office of Appellate Operations (OAO) has had to create a process of sending and receiving the hearing recordings and transcriptions electronically. *Doc.* 7 at 2-3. That “process is functioning now, albeit at only half of normal productivity.” *Doc.* 7 at 3. The Court understands that it will take some time for the OAO to get back up to speed with its backlog of pending cases. However, given the importance that Social Security benefits have to their recipients and the fact that these matters already take substantial time to complete, the Court cannot conclude that a 60-day extension is necessary at this time. Therefore, the Court grants Defendant’s motion in part: it will give Defendant until September 10, 2020 to file the answer and certified administrative record in this case. If Defendant is unable to produce the administrative record at that time, he can request another 30-day stay.

SO ORDERED THIS 30th day of July, 2020.



JEROME T. KEARNEY
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE